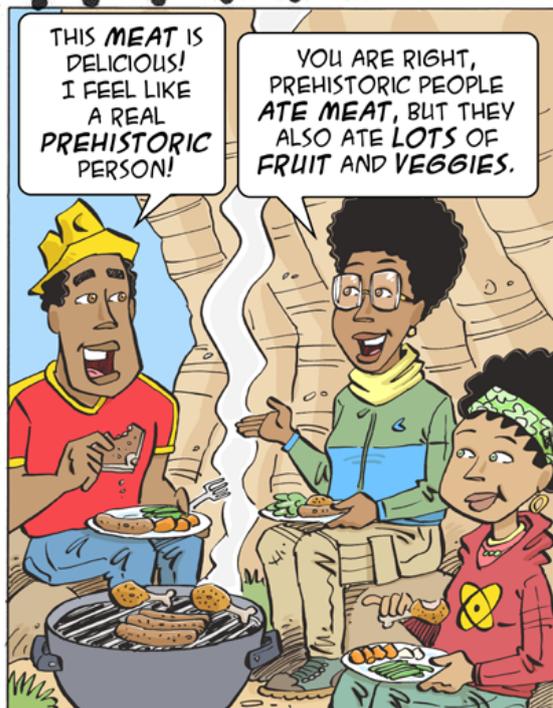


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www.sciencespaza.org

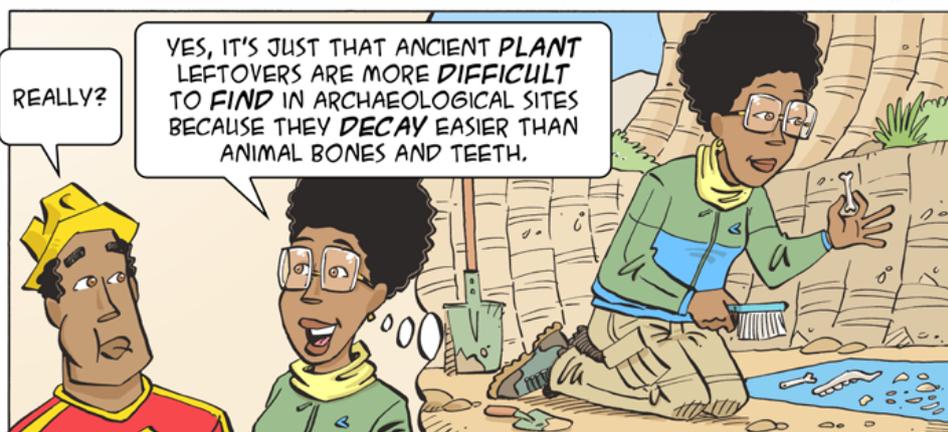


A TASTE OF THE PAST! THE FOOD ANCIENT PEOPLE ATE



THIS MEAT IS DELICIOUS! I FEEL LIKE A REAL PREHISTORIC PERSON!

YOU ARE RIGHT, PREHISTORIC PEOPLE ATE MEAT, BUT THEY ALSO ATE LOTS OF FRUIT AND VEGGIES.



REALLY??

YES, IT'S JUST THAT ANCIENT PLANT LEFTOVERS ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO FIND IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES BECAUSE THEY DECAY EASIER THAN ANIMAL BONES AND TEETH.



OH, WOW I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. I GUESS I BETTER EAT THESE VEGGIES TOO!

LOOKING BACK IN TIME

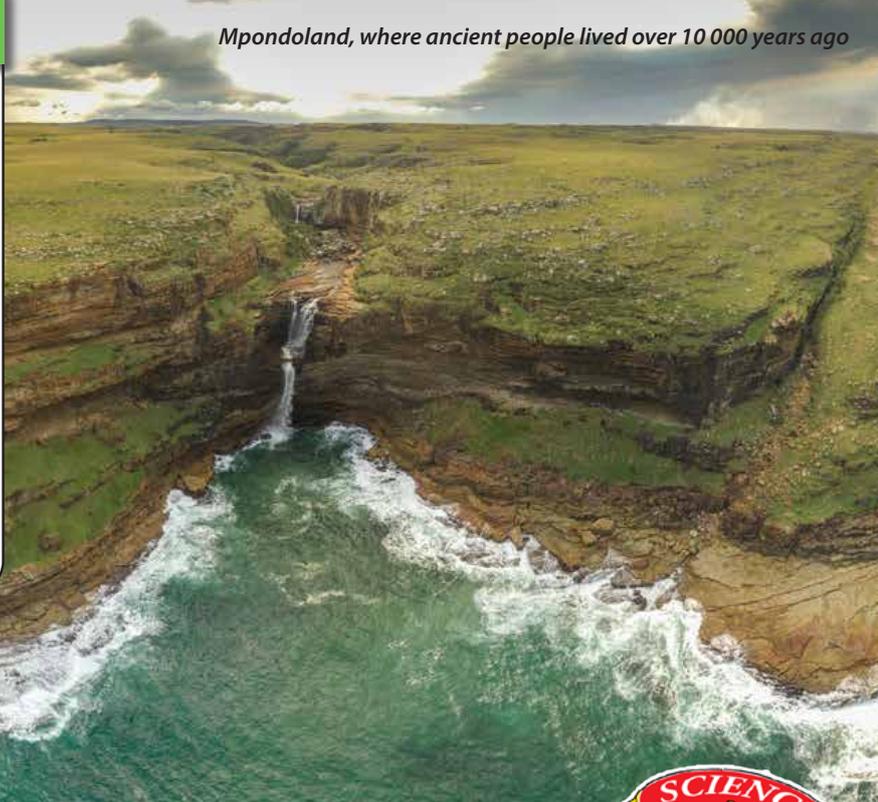
ARCHAEOLOGY IS THE STUDY OF PEOPLE FROM THE PAST BY LOOKING AT THE EVIDENCE THEY LEFT BEHIND. ANCIENT PEOPLE ATE ANIMALS AND PLANTS JUST LIKE WE DO TODAY.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS DISCOVERED MANY KINDS OF FOOD PLANTS IN THE PLACES WHERE ANCIENT PEOPLE ONCE LIVED.

THE REGION OF Mpondoland ON THE EAST COAST OF SOUTH AFRICA IS HOME TO LOTS OF PLANTS AND FLOWERS. MANY OF THESE ARE EDIBLE AND STILL ENJOYED BY THE AMAPONDO PEOPLE AND MANY OTHERS TODAY.



Mpondoland, where ancient people lived over 10 000 years ago



Knowledge is Ncah!



A SEED SCAVENGER HUNT!

Seeds are the hard part (grains) of plants that allow them to make new plants. Seeds are covered by a strong *seed coat* that protects a miniature plant called the *embryo* inside.



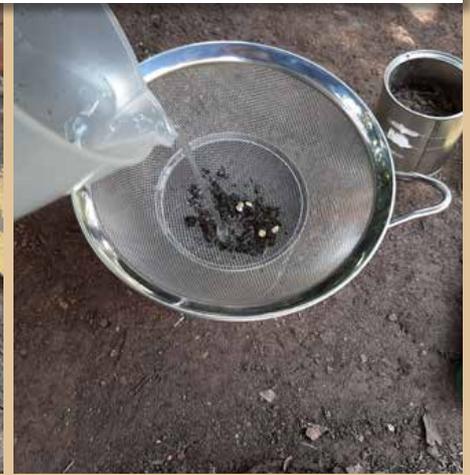
YOU WILL NEED:

- A SMALL SHOVEL, SPOON OR CONTAINER TO SCOOP UP SOIL
- A KITCHEN STRAINER, SIEVE OR NET
- WATER
- A CONTAINER TO COLLECT SEEDS
- A NOTEBOOK AND PEN

1 CHOOSE A SAFE AREA WHERE TREES AND PLANTS GROW AROUND YOUR HOME OR SCHOOL TO EXPLORE.

2 SCOOP UP SOME SOIL AND PLACE IT IN THE SIEVE, STRAINER OR TEA NET. POUR WATER OVER THE SOIL TO DRAIN AWAY THE SOIL.

3 LOOK FOR ANY SEEDS THAT STAY BEHIND.



4 REPEAT THIS PROCESS WITH SOIL FROM A FEW DIFFERENT AREAS UNTIL YOU FIND SEEDS.

5 DESCRIBE THE SHAPE AND COLOUR OF EACH SEED. MAKE NOTES OF WHAT THE PLANT LOOKS LIKE IF YOU CAN SEE IT.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS LOOK FOR ANCIENT SEEDS

Just like you did, archaeologists also collect, wash and sieve soil to look for seeds and plant remains in caves and archaeological sites.



Washing and sieving soil from an ancient cave



Searching for ancient seeds

Ancient evidence of plants is often hard to find because it was either eaten or decayed over time. Sometimes, plant remains are *preserved* depending on the environmental or soil conditions, such as totally wet or very dry places.

But many seeds are preserved at archaeological sites because they were *charred*, this means the seeds burned a bit and blackened like charcoal.

Archaeologists learn about the diet of ancient people from the charred remains.



DISCOVERIES ON HOME SOIL

At the WaterFall Bluff rock shelter in Mpondoland in the Eastern Cape archaeologists of the P5 Project discovered preserved seeds.

These seeds helped them to reconstruct what prehistoric people ate here over 10,000 years ago.



CAREERS: MAKE HISTORY YOUR FUTURE!



Tatenda Tavingeyi

is a member of the P5 Project and an EU Erasmus mundus ARCHMAT 2022–2024 Scholar. Tatenda managed the project's laboratory in East London and trained to identify ancient seeds from Mpondoland.

Archaeology offers exciting career paths as:

- Researchers
- Lab managers
- Museum technicians

CURRICULUM LINKS

- *Life Skills Gr 1 to 3*
Plants and seeds
- *Social Sciences Gr 4 to 6*
Topic: The First Farmers in southern Africa with reference to the hunter-gathers
- *Natural Sciences Gr 7-9*
Seeds – the reproductive organ of plants

Knowledge is NCAW!



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

COMPLETE THE CROSSWORD TO TEST YOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOW-HOW!

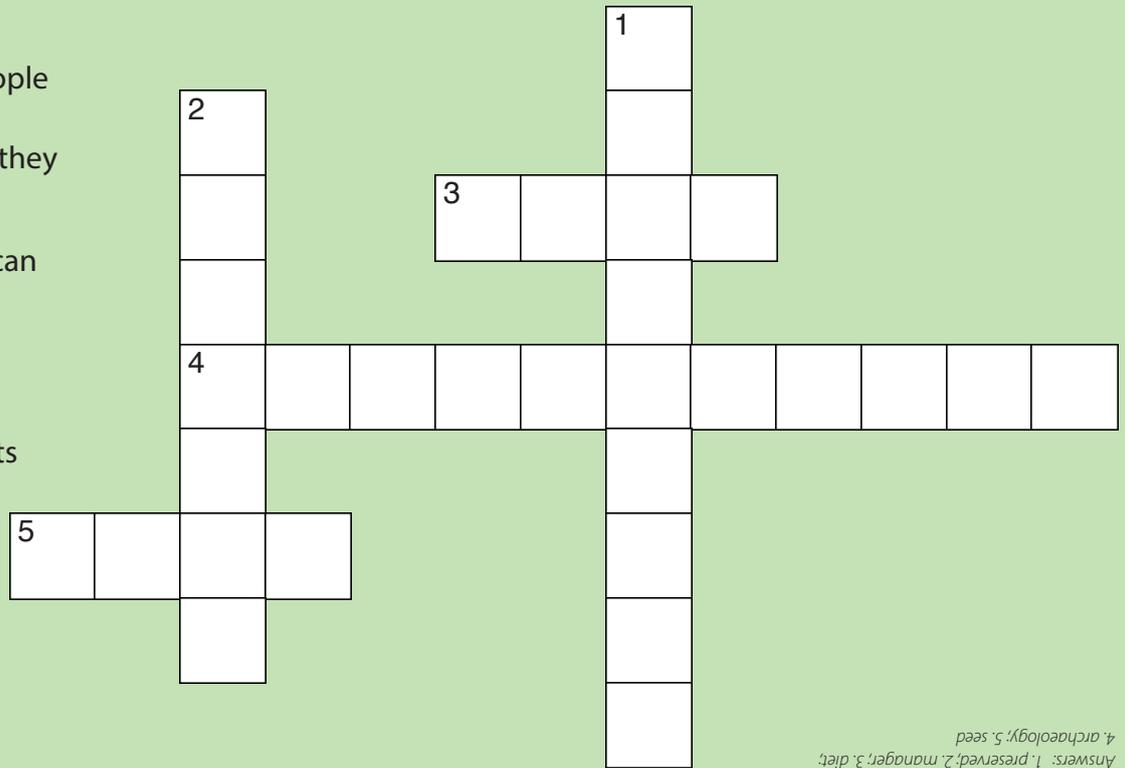


Across

- A word to describe the foods that a person eats
- The study of ancient people and from the past by looking at the evidence they left behind is called....
- The part of a plant that can give rise to a new plant

Down

- When plant materials do not rot, archaeologists say the seeds have been
- One possible career path for an archaeologist is to become a lab



Answers: 1. preserved; 2. manager; 3. diet; 4. archaeology; 5. seed

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WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE HOW MANY SEEDS YOU COULD COLLECT IN YOUR AREA! SEND YOUR PHOTOS TO 076 173 7130



The P5 Project is an international and interdisciplinary collaboration of researchers studying human adaptations to coastal environments. More information about the P5 Project can be found at <https://p5project.org>, via facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pfiveproject/>, via twitter at <https://twitter.com/p5project> and on YouTube.

